
Cuso
Annual Report
2025
2026



Photo credit: Shakat Media

Table of Contents

3 — Message from the CEO and Board Co-Chairs

4 — Countries Where Cuso Works

5 — Cuso in Action

11 — Impact Numbers Across All Cuso Programming in 2025-2026

12 — Financial Overview

13 — Cuso Champion Spotlight

15 — Making our work possible

Message from the CEO & Board Co-Chairs

This past year has been a cause for celebration, reflection, and change.

Across the International Cooperation community, organizations are dealing with a rapidly changing landscape. Major shifts in foreign policy and foreign aid budgets around the globe have resulted in the shrinking or shuttering of longstanding programs, and reductions in community services.

For Cuso, we continue to navigate these challenges drawing on 65 years of Canadian-led ingenuity, kindness, and humility. As we reflect on what has driven sustainable change in the past, and what grounds Cuso in our present, it is our partnerships that inform our view of the future.

These partnerships extend across traditional sectoral boundaries. Cuso is building bridges between local communities, allies, governments, and private sector companies. Sometimes these bridges are enabled by Cuso's skilled volunteers who remain an important part of our work. In other cases, Cuso is working with community-based organizations alongside private companies to provide meaningful employment, agency, and opportunities for those facing barriers and discrimination. Cuso is also proudly partnering with groups where formal employment may not be attainable, to deliver entrepreneurship programs which provide resources and support towards sustainable livelihoods for all.

While the state of traditional funding for International Cooperation will remain uncertain in the year ahead, we continue to adapt to these realities and deliver impactful work with our partners by building capacity and self-sufficiency. This includes reaching out to new audiences, new partners, and finding new ways to approach sustainable change.

Even as Canada turns its focus towards domestic concerns, after more than six decades, we know that individual Canadians will always remain committed to helping others. Domestic priorities and helping others are not mutually exclusive. Canada's international assistance is an investment in building resilient communities, strong economies, and opportunities for all. In addition to these being good for people, these are key to fostering peace and security as well as developing great trading partnerships which benefit everyone.

Ultimately, Cuso's work is about more than cooperation between partners and nations. It is about working across communities, sectors, and countries to build the type of world where everyone has an opportunity to live free from poverty, feel comfortable being themselves, and can be resilient when facing both our individual as well as common challenges.

Thanks to the unwavering support from our partners, donors, volunteers, and our teams Cuso, continues to deliver supports to some of the groups most in need around the world.



Nicolas Moyer
CEO



Darrell Gregersen
Co-Chair



Lori Spadorcia
Co-Chair

Countries Where Cuso Works

In 2025-2026, Cuso worked in 19 countries in Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, and Canada. Together with our local partners, through these programs we worked to create lasting, meaningful change.

19
Countries

182
Active volunteer placements

391
Partners supported

LATIN AMERICA



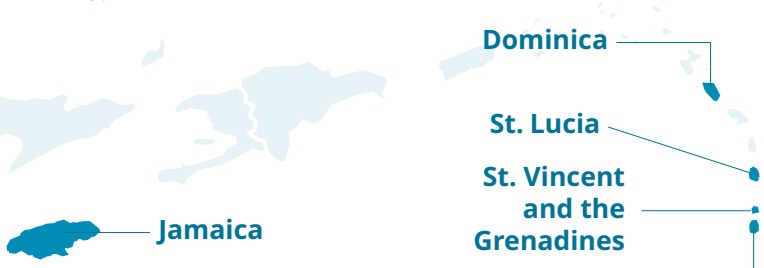
AFRICA



CANADA



THE CARIBBEAN



216,386
Participants who accessed any support

62,996
Participants who completed training



Cuso in Action

Supporting Entrepreneurial Ventures and Formal Employment in Peru

Peru - Arequipa, Callao, Ica, Lima and Piura

Building on Cuso's SCOPE program, the PROMESA project launched this year in Peru.

Cuso's PROMESA program works to increase the well-being of Venezuelan migrants and refugees in Peru, along with vulnerable members of host communities, including women, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and Indigenous groups.

In collaboration with our local partner ENCUENTROS - Jesuit Migrant Service, and in partnership with Global Affairs Canada (GAC), Cuso is helping to increase inclusive, sustainable, and gender-sensitive socio-economic well-being of people in these groups.

Cuso's team in Peru increased individuals' participation in formal jobs and self-employment income-generating activities that are sustainable and gender-sensitive. The project also works to improve practices of government and the private sector to ensure they are safe, inclusive, gender-responsive and/or environmentally fair.

Since its launch, Cuso's PROMESA program has seen success in many areas including:

153 participants were linked to formal employment

340 people's small businesses were strengthened

285 participants obtained certifications in vocational training courses

1,492 individual participants received support



Photo credit: Marlon Forest

Breaking Down Barriers in the Caribbean

Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines

The Blueprints for Gender Equality (BLUEPRINTS) project was successfully completed this year.

Through the BLUEPRINTS program, Cuso has worked with local governments to better integrate gender equality and social inclusion into their programs, policies, and services aimed at women and groups facing barriers. This includes women living with disabilities, Indigenous women, and LGBTQIA+ people. Working with local partners, Cuso has fostered regional collaborations, enabling local governments to share lessons learned and good practices across the Caribbean - building bridges between different actors, creating a holistic approach and meaningful change.

As part of this effort, the Cuso team in Grenada collaborated with local partners focused on empowering girls and women Grand Anse Social Development Centre (GASDC) and Programme for Adolescent Mothers (PAM) and in partnership with GAC, to develop and distribute Dignity Kits, providing girls and young women with menstrual products, and information.



In 2025-2026, Cuso's Blueprints' impact included:

293 participants completed training in gender-responsive and human rights-based approaches and techniques for inclusive programs and services

42 local partners supported

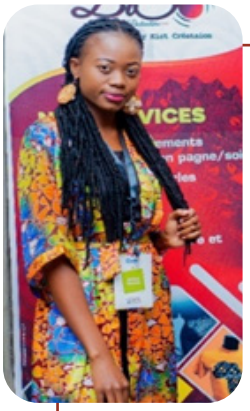
137 participants accessed technical, financial services, funding supports

Empowering Professionals, Strengthening Businesses, and Supporting Communities in DRC

Democratic Republic of Congo

Launched in 2022, Talents Pluriels wrapped up successfully this year.

Through this program, Cuso strengthened the economic and social inclusion of vulnerable young people, particularly women, LGBTQIA+ individuals, people with disabilities, and displaced persons, through training, entrepreneurship, coaching, and advocacy. Cuso's team in DRC, in partnership with GAC and the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), supported with improved access to employment, created economic opportunities, and promoted more inclusive environments.



"The support and guidance offered by (Cuso) have enabled me to stand out from the crowd in terms of the marketing and presentation of my products. Thanks to the funding I received, I was able to buy the raw materials I needed and build a large stock of products to sell, which has considerably improved my income."

– Gloria Kidiadi Kieta, participant



"By participating in this program, I hoped for guidance, follow-up, and support – and Cuso made that possible. Acquiring new skills was challenging at first, but my determination carried me through."

– Charly Solo, participant

In 2025-2026, Cuso's Talents Pluriels' impact included:

635 entrepreneurial ventures started or strengthened

78 local partners supported

451 participants secured formal jobs

7,667 participants completed training. This includes gender equality and social inclusion training, safe, inclusive, and gender-responsive training in entrepreneurship and employability, and how to develop and adopt human resources policies and strategies

> "Networking with other entrepreneurs, both at Cuso and elsewhere, has allowed me to broaden my horizons and exchange ideas, which is invaluable for a young entrepreneur like me."
>
> – Rachel Kasongo, participant



Graduation Ceremony in DRC



Cuso in Action

Transforming Education and Communities for Girls in Ethiopia

In Ethiopia, **Cuso's U GIRLS 2 project** was successfully completed this year. Since its launch in 2020, this Cuso program supported thousands of girls in completing their secondary education. Taking a holistic community-based approach, Cuso combined academic support, life-skills training, and financial assistance, with household, school, and community level outreach and training to create sustainable change.

Building Youth Leadership in Canada's Northern Territories

Working in Canada's Northern Territories, Cuso's **Growing Youth Leadership in Indigenous Northern Territories (GLINT) project** is building pathways to leadership for northern youth, while also fostering inclusion, environmental stewardship, and reconciliation. The program works towards building economic resilience by providing micro-grants to youth-led projects which focus on building capacity in their communities.

Supporting Climate Action Within Our Programming

Cuso incorporates climate action into many of its programs. From supporting farmers in Cameroon in getting better access to climatological information, to supporting National Conservation Trusts in the Caribbean with integrating equity and inclusion into climate initiatives while strengthening environmental protection efforts, Cuso's programs support livelihood resilience and climate adaptation by and for communities affected by climate change.

Impact Numbers Across All Cuso Programming in 2025-2026

391
Partners supported

~600
Participants in a formal job

635
Businesses started or strengthened

975
Participants in self-employment/ entrepreneurship

+ 7,000
Participants reporting adoption of climate-smart or circular economy practices within their jobs or self-employment

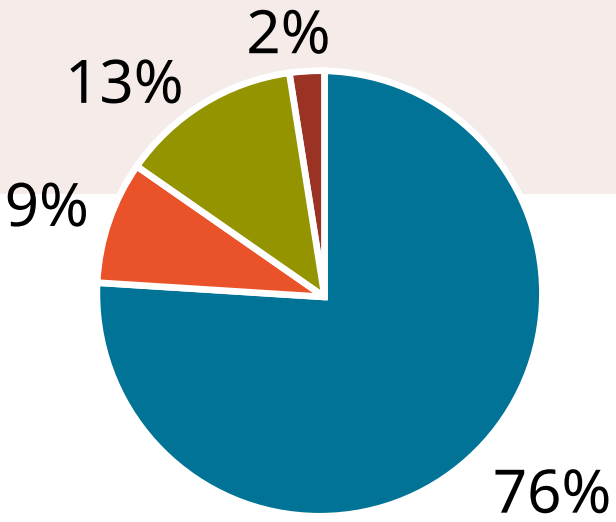
~7,400
Participants self-reporting increased income compared to before the project/ 12 months earlier

~63,000
Participants completed training

Financial Overview

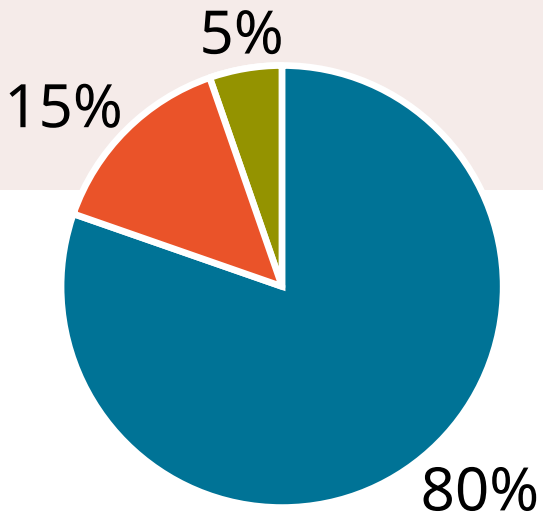
Revenues
$21,967,797

- Funding from the Government of Canada
- Funding from other Governments and Institutions
- Donations, Grants, & Bequests
- Income from Investments & Other



Expenses
$20,938,682

- Programs
- Operations
- Fundraising





$3.9 million

in collective in-kind contributions from volunteers, providing knowledge and technical expertise while working alongside local partners in 2025-2026.

Cuso Champion Spotlight



Photo credit: Allan Culham

The staff of the District Commissioner's Office in Molepolole, Botswana, February 1977.

Allan Culham

Cuso Volunteer, Botswana (1974 - 1981)
Former Ambassador of Canada to Guatemala, El Salvador, Venezuela and the Organization of American States

Allan Culham first joined Cuso in the 1970s as a volunteer in Botswana. While his days volunteering with Cuso may be over, Allan continues to play a vital role in Cuso's mission, donating to support Cuso today, as well as leaving a gift in his Will that will support Cuso's programming in the future.

"A few years ago, I saw the impact directly of a number of Cuso projects in Colombia, where I spent some time as an emergency Ambassador. Working at the local level with committed counterparts has always been a strength of Cuso and it has generated results. This is what I witnessed first-hand in Colombia. Such efforts are worthy of support," he said.



"Over the years, Cuso has changed many lives, both overseas and here in Canada, and continues to do so. It has made people better citizens and encouraged them in their own efforts to work for positive change in their societies and communities. And that, quite simply, is why I continue to support Cuso."

Allan's journey with Cuso began in 1973. While studying Economics at the University of Western Ontario, Allan heard Cuso alumni Sharon Capeling and her husband speak passionately about their experience volunteering in the Caribbean. A year later, inspired by Sharon's story, Allan chose a volunteer opportunity with Cuso in Botswana.

Allan spent seven years in Botswana. During that time, he first worked as a District Officer in Molepolole, the centre of the Kweneng District, coordinating development plans for government services in the district. He later worked in Kanye as the secretary of the Kanye Brigades Development Trust, an NGO involved in training students in basic skills like carpentry, bricklaying, mechanics, farming, and textiles, to generate employment at the village level.

At the time, Botswana had only been independent for 8 years. Volunteers like Allan were filling in the gaps until trained Batswana came along to take their positions.

"The time I spent with Cuso in Botswana had a profound effect on me both professionally and personally. It provided me with valuable work experiences at a very practical level that were so useful in my later career. Personally, the experience taught me how to work in another culture with sensitivity and respect," said Allan.

"I know it is a cliché, but I gained much more from the experience than I was able to contribute to the development of Botswana. I will forever be grateful to Botswana and the Batswana people that allowed me to have this experience."

Allan went on to work with Global Affairs Canada (GAC), spending more than 10 years as an Ambassador of Canada.

“My mother always used to say to me that without the lessons and experiences I gained from my 7 years in Botswana, I would never have been able to enjoy such a fulfilling career,” he said. “I agree with her unreservedly.”

On top of this, Allan says the friendships he made have endured and continue to enrich his life. In March 2026, Allan went back to Botswana, visiting old colleagues and friends, their children, and grandchildren.

“The Batswana were so warm and welcoming when they learned who I was and why I was there. It truly was a “trip of a lifetime”.



Watch the video:
youtube.com/watch?v=WGhmJuTMzak

Leaving a Legacy with Cuso

Thank you to our generous supporters for their compassion and action in leaving Cuso in their Will this past year. Supports like this are vital in building better futures for individuals and groups facing barriers and/or discrimination around the world. This level of change doesn’t happen overnight, it happens over a lifetime.

- Estate of Joyce Doreen Dalgleish
- Estate of Liushien Goon
- Estate of Robert Généreux
- Estate of Michael Phillip Mutter
- Estate of Rita Stern
- Estate of Susan Mary Tennant
- Estate of Dr. Margaret Ann Wheatley

Making Our Work Possible

With support from our institutional funders and our generous donors in Canada and around the globe, Cuso developed new partnerships and enhanced existing ones, expanding our impact around the world. Here are some of the partners who make our work possible.

In partnership with Canada

Employment and Social Development Canada

Sweden Sverige

MCIC Manitoba Council for International Cooperation

unicef

BENEFACTION FOUNDATION

UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency

german cooperation DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT





About Cuso

Cuso is a Canadian-founded and led global development organization dedicated to addressing poverty and creating opportunities for equity. At Cuso, we believe in the transformative power of collaboration and action. For over six decades, we have worked alongside communities - in Canada and around the world – to create sustainable change, fostering economic growth, social well-being, and resilience.

Cuso's partnership model helps build bridges between governments, community organizations, private sector actors and equity-deserving groups. Through our innovative programs, dedicated volunteers, and strong partnerships, we support communities with the tools, education, and resources to build brighter futures for everyone.

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